

5/7/ (4)

Town of Acton

Memo

To: Board of Selectmen
From: Steven L Ledoux, Town Manager
Date: May 3, 2012
Re: Use of Windsor Building

As the attached string of emails shows, there are competing interests for the Windsor Building, including Civil Defense, use by the Minutemen, use by WACL, and use by a community theater group.

A couple of years ago, I had budgeted for a space needs study to review all Town space needs to determine whether we have the facilities available to meet the needs and to explore alternatives. Unfortunately, the study was not funded when we reached crunch time before Town Meeting.

With the discussion surrounding the land use offices reorganization with the Finance Committee, I had committed to the FinCom Chair that we attempt to do that very analysis again. I am in the process of getting quotes for the cost, and I am meeting the Mr. Tindal on Tuesday to discuss process. I feel that the Windsor Building should be included in the analysis.

It is my recommendation to defer until the analysis is complete.

Steve Ledoux

From: Dean Charter
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2012 8:14 AM
To: John Murray; Manager Department
Cc: Gail Sawyer
Subject: RE: Windsor Ave building

John raises some good points about the need for proper storage space for equipment for all departments. I have been pursuing storage issues for practically my entire career and those projects, such as a storage building for Natural Resources, expanded or alternate space for Municipal Properties equipment, and records storage space always get short shrift during the budget process. I am hopeful that John will support me this year in October.

I would suggest that some end of the year money be spent to purchase a few more cargo trailers, such as the one Emergency Management already has, to be used for storage of items such as generators and pumps. This equipment would be ready to roll if stored in this manner and this would be much safer in regards to storage of the fuel for this equipment. Our insurance carrier has spoken to us several times about the problems involved in storing fuel in refill cans or equipment in buildings. New trailers would be nice and tight and would not be a problem for mice and insects.

The second floor of the Windsor Building has already be pressed into service for storage of financial records, and is serving quite well. This use should remain until a better solution is developed. The ground floor of the Windsor Building would not be suitable for the storage of motor vehicles or motorized equipment, such as generators, for Emergency Management due to floor loading issues, overhead height issues, the wood floors, and the fact that for historic reasons the new doors were installed as in-swings, limiting the depth of the pays. Admittedly this area was used for motor equipment prior to 1960, but that was also prior to the establishment of a statewide building code.

Starting about two years ago we completely rehabilitated the garage at the Senior Center. I suggest that the shelter supplies be brought up to that location, which is only about fifty feet away from the Senior Center itself. Since the Senior Center will continue to be the primary shelter (and we are now working on procuring the generator for this facility), it makes sense to have these supplies here. When the shelter needs to be set up the equipment can be easily carried to the shelter and we will not have this issue of loading and unloading vehicles from remote locations.

Keeping the ground floor of the Windsor Building "Unassigned" allows it to be used for a variety of sanctioned events, as in the past, such as library book sales, Farmers Market events, HDC workshops, and the like. Bringing Emergency Management equipment into this area would not really solve any problems that could not be solved better as I have outlined above, and would eliminate the use for other functions.

Regards,

Dean

From: John Murray
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2012 10:40 AM
To: Manager Department
Cc: Dean Charter; Gail Sawyer
Subject: RE:Windsor Ave building

I agree with Dean – the Windsor Ave. Building is an asset that should be used. I also understand there are multiple outside groups that wish to use the building. It is my hope that the Board will give priority to Town departments rather than other non-governmental civic uses.

The Emergency Management department needs additional space for vehicles and equipment. The current headquarters is located at the intersection of School and Main Street in the old 1920s South Acton Fire Station. According to Bill Klauer, that facility has not been renovated since original construction except for new doors and windows.

This facility is too small for the function adequately and is in need of significant maintenance. Preventative and major maintenance programs for this building were cut during the early 1990's recession. . Currently, Emergency Management operates out of the highway barn (shares a small room with Municipal Properties and uses the part of the second floor/attic)and the Emergency Management Building. Emergency Management also has vehicles stored to the right side of the Highway Building. These vehicles are subject to the weather and to infestation by mice, bees and other animals. The ham radio station (required by state law/regulation is stuck in a corner of the attic of the Emergency Management building. Its dated equipment and location limits its functionality.

In addition, Emergency Management has received two grants of equipment one from the Homeland Security and the second from the State. The first from NERAC is for assorted equipment (please see attachment) and the second from MEMA is for 2 additional generators. Space is not available at the Emergency Management building for this free equipment and items such as barriers and generators are not items that should be stored in the attic of the Highway Building.

In addition to its governmental use Emergency Management hosts/supports an Explorer Scout troop, which includes many special needs young adults. Emergency Management also performs many services for the community such as basement pumping, sand bag filling and delivery and plowing and shoveling for the elderly and the disable, Emergency Management is volunteered based and therefore there is no labor charges for its services.

Please provide Emergency Management with adequate space to provide its official duties and its civic duties and designate the Windsor Building as an Emergency Management Annex. John and David have toured the Emergency Management Building and If any other Board member wish to take a tour please contact me

Thank You

John

From: Dean Charter
Sent: Wednesday, April 25, 2012 2:52 PM
To: Manager Department
Subject: FW: Minuteman building

As per discussion from Staff Meeting

Can we get this on the next BOS agenda?

Thanks

Dean

From: Dean Charter
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2012 11:32 AM
To: Manager Department
Subject: FW: Minuteman building

I am in receipt of a request from the Acton Minutemen to use the downstairs of the Windsor Building on Thursday evenings for music practice for the Davis Blues. I am recommending approval of this request on a temporary, short term basis. This would be supportive of a well established civic organization that certainly adds to the character of the Town. The permission would be dependent upon their accepting a list of conditions for such use, including access arrangements, termination in case of sound complaints from neighbors, termination upon permanent re-use of the building, etc. It would be good to have more public use of the building now that at least some of the renovations have been completed, and this seems to be a good fit considering the degree of finish of the interior. I have reviewed the issue with the Building Commissioner, and he feels that this limited use would be appropriate.

If the Board approves this use in concept (similar to existing uses such as Library book sale and occasional use by the Farmers Market already ongoing, I will work out the details.

Regards,

Dean A. Charter, MCA, MCPPO
Municipal Properties Director

From: Paul Dormitzer [<mailto:paul.dormitzer@lhlogic.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2012 8:52 PM
To: Dean Charter
Cc: Dan Silva; 'Steve Crozby'
Subject: RE: Minuteman building

Hello Dean,

Thanks for considering our request for a practice space. The Isaac Davis Blues is the fife and drum group within the Acton Minutemen. You've probably seen us in the various town parades and other civic ceremonies. For many years, the Isaac Davis Blues practiced in the "Acton Minutemen Headquarters" on Windsor Ave in West Acton, across the street from the Citizens' Library. When the building was condemned, we lost that space. Now that the building has been renovated by the town, we would like to hold our music rehearsals there. We have been finding space as best we can on a week-by-week basis, which makes it difficult for the parents of the kids in the group to plan. Our practices are every Thursday evening, usually from 6:30 to 8:30. If we could have the use of the Windsor building on Thursday evenings, that would be very helpful. Since we sometimes need to change our practice times to accommodate people's schedules, it would be helpful if we could reserve the space from 5:00 to 9:00.

Thanks very much,

Paul Dormitzer

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Dan Silva [<mailto:dsilva@acton-ma.gov>]

> Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2012 10:19 AM

> To: Steve Crozby; Paul Dormitzer

> Cc: Dean Charter

> Subject: Minuteman building

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> Steve, Paul,

> I spoke with Dean Charter regarding the minuteman building for the

> Isaac Davis Blues practice location. Mr. Charter would like to receive

> a letter requesting what you require, dates, times use, etc. He will

> then attempt to get the appropriate authorization (Board of Selectmen)

> for use.

> Mr. Charter is the Director of the Municipal Properties, 472 Main

> Street, Acton MA 01720 dcharter@acton-ma.gov

>

> Thanks

> Dan

>

> Dan Silva has

> Sent this from his iPad